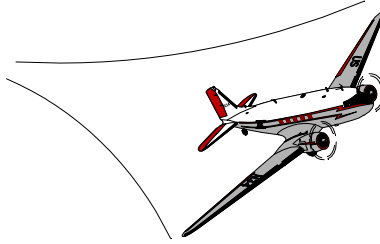


SPECIAL AIRWORTHINESS INFORMATION BULLETIN

Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

No. CE-04-24
December 2, 2003

www.faa.gov - Search "SAIBs"

This is information only. Recommendations aren't mandatory.

Introduction

This Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin alerts you, repair stations, mechanics holding Inspection Authorization (IA) and Flight Standard District Office (FSDO) Principal Maintenance Inspectors (PMI) and/or Principal Avionics Inspectors (PAI) of service difficulties and safety issues associated with **certain aircraft equipped with Loral Fairchild (now L-3 Communication – Aviation Recorders) Model F-800 Flight Data Recorders (FDR).**

Background

The National Transportation Safety Board's examination of transcribed data extracted from certain aircraft equipped with Loral Fairchild Model F-800 FDRs has revealed that the FDR improperly switches to the first track of the recording tape when electrical power to the FDR is stopped. The examined FDRs did not record data throughout the length of its 25-hour tape loop as required by some operational regulations. The manufacturer identified several causes of track-switching malfunctions and issued two Field Service Bulletins (DFR 011 and DFR 027) to correct the defect.

Proper operation of an aircraft's FDR system contributes directly to increased aircraft safety and is necessary to maintain certain operational regulatory requirements to keep 25 hours of oldest recorded data. FDRs have proven to be valuable tools in the accident investigation process and can provide information that may be difficult or impossible to obtain by other means. Improper management and maintenance of the aircraft's FDR system can contribute to loss of recorded data that could be vital in determining the cause of aircraft accidents and aircraft systems failures.

Recommendation

The FAA recommends that all operators of airplanes equipped with Loral Fairchild Model F-800 FDRs comply with Loral Fairchild Field Service Bulletin (FSB) No. DFR 011 and DFR 027 for recorders with applicable part numbers and installed component numbers. Operators should take appropriate action to assure that effected F-800 FDRs have been modified per the FSBs and that maintenance performed on FDRs has not introduced unmodified components that do not conform to the FSBs.

For Service Bulletin Information Contact

L-3 Communication – Aviation Recorders, 6000 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, Florida 34232; phone: 941.371.0811; fax: 941.377.5591; website: www.l-3ar.com.

For Further Information Contact

Kenneth Mobley, Aerospace Engineer, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, FAA Small Airplane Directorate, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, One Crown Center, Suite 450, Atlanta, GA 30349; phone: (770) 703-6046; fax: (770) 703-6097; email: kenneth.mobley@faa.gov